

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

AMEMBASSY BISSAU

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 260948

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: XA, US

SUBJECT: CURRENT FOREIGN RELATIONS; ISSUE NO. 42,
OCTOBER 20, 1976

1. THE FOLLOWING IS AF'S CONTRIBUTION TO ISSUE NO. 42
OF CURRENT FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR POST INFORMATION. FULL
TEXT OF CFR BEING POUCHED PER REGULAR SCHEDULES.

2. AF - OUR RELATIONS WITH MADAGASCAR (CONFIDENTIAL)

ALTHOUGH US-MADAGASCAR RELATIONS HAVE BEEN WORSENING
FOR SOME MONTHS, WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED A TENTATIVE
SIGN THAT A TOUGH US RESPONSE TO THE GDRM'S LATEST
ANTI-US POSTURING MAY HAVE PROMPTED SOME SECOND
THOUGHTS IN TANANARIVE.

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THE LATEST NADIR IN OUR RELATIONS CAME SEPTEMBER 22 WITH THE GDRM'S DECISION TO PNG TWO OFFICIALS OF OUR EMBASSY IN TANANARIVE, WHO WERE FALSELY ACCUSED OF AID-ING STUDENT STRIKERS. IN ADDITION, THE GDRM:

-- SIX WEEKS EARLIER, ASKED ANOTHER US OFFICIAL TO DEPART THE COUNTRY.

-- IN 1975, SEIZED OUR NASA TRACKING STATION AND DEMANDED 10 YEARS' BACK RENT AS PAYMENT. WE REFUSED THIS DEMAND AND HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO REMOVE OUR EQUIPMENT FROM THE STATION.

-- IN JUNE THIS YEAR, NATIONALIZED ALL FOREIGN OIL FIRMS, INCLUDING TWO US COMPANIES. BOTH WERE ASSESSED HUGE FINES FOR "ILLEGAL EXCHANGE CONTROL TRANSACTIONS" WHICH ARE HIGHER THAN THE BOOK VALUE OF THE FIRMS AND SEEM TO PRECLUDE ANY HOPE OF COMPENSATION.

-- FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS, SIDED WITH OTHER RADICAL NATIONS AGAINST US IN INTERNATIONAL FORA.

USG POSITION:

OUR MISSION IN TANANARIVE HAS BEEN WITHOUT AN AMBASSADOR FOR OVER ONE YEAR. BEFORE THE EXPULSIONS, WE HAD REQUESTED AGREEMENT FOR A NEW AMBASSADOR FROM THE GDRM. DUE TO THE GDRM'S RECENT ACTIONS, HOWEVER, WE WITHDREW OUR REQUEST FOR AGREEMENT. WE ALSO INFORMED THE GDRM EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON ON OCTOBER 15 THAT WE WERE RETALIATING BY REQUESTING THE DEPARTURE OF ONE OF THEIR EMBASSY OFFICIALS.

IN A CONVERSATION WITH OUR CHARGE IN TANANARIVE OCTOBER 19, THE GDRM'S DIRECTOR OF CABINET MADE A PITCH FOR BETTER RELATIONS, OFFERING TO COMPROMISE ON THE NASA ISSUE AND EXPRESSING MADAGASCAR'S INTEREST IN PURCHASING LOCKHEED HERCULES AIRCRAFT. THE CONCILIATORY TREND MAY BE ONLY TACTICAL, IN THE HOPE THAT WE WILL NOT KILL THE AIRCRAFT SALE, OR THE GDRM MAY HAVE GOTTEN OUR MESSAGE. KISSINGER
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